

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2017

by Michael Evans BA MA MPhil DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 08 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/16/3164811

Monchique, Rainbow Road, Chafford Hundred RM16 6NG

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Nedkova against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01098/HHA was refused by notice dated 15 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as 'convert loft to habitable rooms'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect on the character and appearance of the host terrace, streetscene and locality.

Reasons

3. The appeal concerns a property located at the end of a small terrace of three dwellings. The house has a gable end at the front, whereas the others in the terrace have a sloping roof facing the street. The immediate locality is characterised by buildings with traditional pitched roofs. There are dormer additions to the front of the attached dwellings in the terrace. However, these pitched roof projections are fairly modest in size and scale.
 4. The extension would be built on the side facing roof of the dwelling. It would have sloping roofs at either end with a flat topped area in between. Such a relatively extensive area of flat roof would be a discordant presence given the pitched roof character of the host terrace and locality. The addition would only be set in a metre at each end. This would be relatively restricted in itself and in relation to the overall length of the roof of which the gaps would form a fairly small proportion. Moreover, the distance to the ridge and eaves would be even more limited. As a result, a particularly high proportion of the roof slope would be covered, reflecting the excessive size, scale and mass of the extension. In consequence, it would be unacceptably dominant and bulky.
 5. It would not be possible to look directly at the front of the proposed extension from the street due to its position at the side and the presence of the immediately adjacent dwelling at no. 70. It is also acknowledged that the part
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closest to the road would have a sloping roof. Nevertheless, I saw at my site visit that the gap to the adjacent dwelling would be sufficient to enable the unsympathetic appearance of the addition to be readily apparent when looking from the street.

6. As a result of these factors, the character and appearance of the host terrace, streetscene and locality would be harmed. The proposal would conflict with the aims of Thurrock Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development, Policies PMD2 and CSTP22 that development must contribute positively to the character of the area and respond positively to the local context.
7. Thurrock Borough Local Plan, Adopted September 1997, Annexe A1, Criteria relating to the control of development in residential areas, advises that dormer windows, particularly on front and exposed elevations, should not occupy more than 25% of the total area of the roof slope within which they are constructed. It is also indicated that on front or exposed elevations readily seen from public places such development should not incorporate a flat roof unless these are characteristic of the streetscene. The development would cover substantially more than a quarter of the roof slope, with both this and the uncharacteristic presence of the flat roof part being readily apparent from the street. The proposal would therefore also be contrary to this guidance.
8. I am reinforced in my view regarding the adverse impact of the development by the importance placed on design in the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework). It is a core principle of the Framework that planning should always seek to secure high quality design, which would not be achieved in this instance. Moreover, it is indicated in the Framework that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning.
9. The Appellant has referred to the Council granting planning permission for similar extensions, with specific reference to the properties at nos. 5, 25 and 31 Felipe Road. However, despite being of a similar appearance to the extension now proposed these are in a different road and do not form part of the immediate context against which the effect of the current proposal must be judged. Furthermore, the reasons why the Council approved these developments are not clear and I must consider this proposal in relation to its own specific circumstances.
10. It is acknowledged that the living conditions and privacy of the adjacent occupiers would not be detrimentally affected. However, this mere acceptability does not weigh positively in favour of the proposal.
11. Taking account of the above and all other matters raised, I conclude that there are no other considerations sufficient to justify accepting the development. Due to the harm that would result and conflict with the development plan it is determined that the appeal fails.

M Evans

INSPECTOR